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Identical letters dated 9 December 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 5 December 2008 from the President of the French Republic, in his capacity as current President of the Council of the European Union, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning the disarmament initiatives which the European Union presented at the United Nations this year.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Jean-Pierre **Lacroix**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 9 December 2008 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

The United Nations has an important role to play in the debate on disarmament. Europe wishes to be a full participant in that discussion. Accordingly, I should like to draw your attention to the proposals which the European Union presented at the United Nations this year.

On 23 September I told the United Nations General Assembly that the European Union wanted to act in the service of peace. This is true in the case of counter-terrorism, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and crisis management.

It is also true with respect to disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. This matter is of special interest to Europe, two of whose member States have nuclear weapons. Europe has already made great strides towards disarmament. Considering that its security will also benefit from the pursuit of global disarmament efforts, Europe stands ready to do more; we aspire to address all aspects of disarmament, as we are convinced of the need to work towards general disarmament. In this area, as in others, Europe intends to act in accordance with a coordinated political and strategic vision.

In 2010 the international non-proliferation regime will reach a milestone with the convening of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We should seize that opportunity to make progress towards a safer world in which all of the Treaty's objectives, whether in the area of non-proliferation, disarmament or access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, can be met. With respect to disarmament, Europe wished to propose a clear way forward this year by presenting a number of practical, realistic initiatives at the United Nations General Assembly:

- Universal ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and completion of its verification regime, and dismantling, as soon as possible, of all nuclear testing facilities, in a manner that is transparent and open to the international community;
- Immediate opening, without preconditions, of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and observance of an immediate moratorium on the production of such material;
- Development of confidence-building and transparency measures by the nuclear Powers;
- Further progress in the discussions under way between the United States and the Russian Federation on the development of a legally binding post-Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) arrangement, and overall reduction of global nuclear weapon stockpiles pursuant to article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, in particular by the States with the biggest arsenals;
- Inclusion of tactical nuclear weapons, by those States that have them, in general arms control and disarmament processes, with a view to their reduction and elimination;

- Opening of consultations on a treaty banning short- and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles;

- Universal subscription to and implementation of the Hague Code of Conduct;

- Mobilization in all other areas of disarmament.

Progress on the road to disarmament requires that the will to move forward be shared by all. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, along with confidence-building, transparency and reciprocity, are essential elements of collective security.

I hope that the international community will join the European Union in supporting and carrying out this plan of action. It is an ambitious agenda that has a real prospect of leading to concrete advances towards disarmament.

Europe is counting on your support. I therefore ask that you convey to the international community, particularly within the United Nations, this initiative in support of a safer world.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Nicolas **Sarkozy**